

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

RESOLUTION No. 118

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE STATE WATER POLLUTION
CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ACCOUNT FOR DRY CLEANER STUDY IN
NORTHERN SANTA CLARA COUNTY**

Whereas, Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) on October 2, 2001 adopted Resolution No. 2001-62 authorizing SCVWD staff to apply for funding from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) to conduct a study of water quality impacts to groundwater from past and current dry cleaning operations in northern Santa Clara County;

Whereas, Section 13442 of the California Water Code states that upon application by a public agency with authority to clean up waste or abate the effects thereof, the State Board may order moneys to be paid from the CAA to the agency to assist it in cleaning up the waste or abating its effect on waters of the State;

Whereas, Regional Board staff has established a Groundwater Committee to propose activities and tasks that would better protect groundwater resources. The Groundwater Committee has prepared a Draft Comprehensive Groundwater Protection Evaluation for South San Francisco Bay Basins (Draft Report) in coordination with SCVWD, Alameda County Water District, and San Mateo County Department of Environmental Health. The Draft Report identifies dry cleaning operations as a significant threat to groundwater quality in these groundwater basins.

Whereas, dry cleaning facilities are a recognized source of subsurface pollution and contamination. Dry cleaners use chlorinated solvents, which when released even in small quantities may potentially degrade large quantities of groundwater. Groundwater pollution is caused by spills and other releases of solvents, primarily perchloroethylene (PCE), a suspected carcinogen used in dry cleaning operations. Discharge has in the past taken place through storm drains and/or sanitary sewers, causing soil and groundwater pollution. Spills may occur from dry cleaning equipment and by chemical handling and storage. Within the Santa Clara County there are currently some 220 dry cleaning facilities permitted by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and an unknown number of closed facilities. Regional Board staff is currently overseeing investigation and cleanup at about 15 dry cleaner sites in northern Santa Clara County. At numerous sites in northern Santa Clara County, shallow groundwater is impacted by low levels of

PCE and its breakdown products that are attributable to unidentified off-site sources, notably dry cleaners.

Whereas, SCVWD proposes to conduct a detailed study of past and current dry cleaner operations in northern Santa Clara County. This study will identify historical locations of dry cleaners back to 1950, and prioritize current and historical dry cleaner sites for their potential to impact groundwater quality, using the SCVWD's geographic information system. The study will analyze the cost of investigating and cleaning up high-priority dry cleaner sites, and will develop conclusions and recommendations for regulatory oversight of dry cleaner sites. The study will cost \$70,000 and will be completed within twelve months of receiving funding. Because the San Francisco Bay Region does not cover SCVWD's entire service area (notably southern Santa Clara County), SCVWD will use its own funds to complete the study for southern Santa Clara County (Gilroy, San Martin, and portions of Morgan Hill). SCVWD has demonstrated technical and regulatory capabilities to undertake the proposed study.

Whereas, the SCVWD study will have direct benefits for the Regional Board's groundwater protection efforts in northern Santa Clara County, by identifying high-priority dry cleaner sites, and elsewhere in the San Francisco Bay Region, by providing a template for similar work in other counties. The SCVWD study will have additional benefits for other Regional Boards and the State Board, by identifying regulatory oversight issues and possible solutions;

Whereas, this Regional Board is responsible for ensuring that present and potential beneficial uses applicable to the main groundwater basins in the Region are protected from the pollution and nuisance that may occur as a result of waste discharges;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, hereby supports Santa Clara Valley Water District's Resolution requesting \$70,000 from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account for a study to assess the impacts to groundwater from dry cleaning operations in northern Santa Clara County.

I, Loretta K. Barsamian, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, on October 17, 2001.



Loretta K. Barsamian
Executive Officer